

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 055978
ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY AF/E:RFILLING/RSPOST:CJ

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S/S - MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 055978

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ET, US

SUBJECT: PROPOSED CALL ON MENGISTU

REFS:A)ADDIS 1209; ADDIS 1389, ADDIS 1433; ROME 3853

1. ONE OF MANY IMPONDERABLES WE FACE AS WE REVIEW OUR POLICY ON HORN OF AFRICA IS QUESTION OF HOW US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONSHIP IS VIEWED BY MENGISTU, WHO HAS EMERGED AS THE ONE MAN WHOSE OPINION COUNTS, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT. THEREFORE, DEPT FEELS IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE SOMEHOW MANAGE TO HAVE FRANK AND THOROUGH DISCUSSION WITH HIM CONCERNING THE PRESENT AND FUTURE STATUS OF OUR RELATIONS. AS EMBASSY HAS NOTED, A SERIOUS GAP EXISTS BETWEEN REASSURANCES WE RECEIVE FROM FOREIGN OFFICE AND MENGISTU'S PUBLIC RHETORIC. PUBLIC RHETORIC MAY NOT IN FACT BE AN ACCURATE GUIDE TO MENGISTU'S VIEWS BUT HIS PUBLIC ANTI-AMERICAN TONE IS MORE IN LINE WITH OTHER INDICATORS OF HIS ATTITUDES THAN

SECRET

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PAGE 02 STATE 055978

ARE MOFA BLANDISHMENTS. IF WE ARE TO ATTEMPT TO CONTINUE OUR RELATIONSHIP AT SOMETHING LIKE CURRENT LEVELS, WE HAVE TO KNOW NOW WHETHER, TO WHAT EXTENT AND WHICH U.S. EFFORTS WILL BE WELCOMED BY MENGISTU, ACCEPTABILITY AT LOWER EPMG LEVELS BEING INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE ON WHICH TO BASE POLICY.

2. YOU SHOULD RENEW TO THE FONOFF IN STRONGEST TERMS YOUR

REQUEST TO CALL ON MENGISTU TO DISCUSS BILATERAL RELATIONS.

YOU SHOULD TELL FONOFF THAT USG HAD BEEN VERY HOPEFUL THAT MENGISTU WOULD HAVE RECEIVED DEPT ASST SEC SEELYE SINCE WE HAD HOPED THAT MENGISTU WOULD USE THE OPPORTUNITY OF THE VISIT OF SUCH A HIGH-RANKING OFFICER TO DISCUSS FULLY AND FRANKLY WITH US THE STATE OF OUR RELATIONS AND WHETHER AND HOW HE FELT THEY MIGHT BE IMPROVED. WE WERE PARTICULARLY DISAPPOINTED WHEN MEETING WAS NOT SCHEDULED SINCE ALL SIGNALS INDICATED THAT SEELYE WOULD BE RECEIVED.

3. IN RENEWING YOUR REQUEST, STRESS THAT USG BELIEVES THAT OUR LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP WITH ETHIOPIA AND THE EXTENT OF OUR PROGRAMS IN SUPPORT OF ETHIOPIA'S ECONOMIC AND MILITARY NEEDS ENTITLE US TO THE COURTESY OF A HEARING BY ETHIOPIA'S LEADER. YOU MAY ALSO CANDIDLY SEEK FONOFF'S APPRAISAL OF JUST WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL TO OBTAIN APPOINTMENT WITH MENGISTU, NOTING THAT OTHER COUNTRIES' RESIDENT OFFICIALS SEEM TO HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN DOING SO WHEREAS EVEN RANKING US OFFICIAL SENT OUT FROM WASHINGTON FOR THIS PURPOSE IS NOT RECEIVED.

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Message Attributes

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